

Human Relations News

from the

MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON GROUP RELATIONS

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

LEO P. CARLIN, MAYOR

An official agency created by the Newark Fair Practice Ordinance to carry out the State policy against discrimination based on race, color, creed or national origin.

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A bi-monthly summary of facts and trends in human relations and civil rights

July 1959

RESEARCH TEAM RECOMMENDS ALL OUT CITY MOBILIZATION

Rent Gouging and Housing Discrimination Listed as Major Problems in Newark

The Mayor's Commission on Group Relations of Newark, New Jersey released July 26 the final volume, including the major findings and recommendations of a one year survey on changing neighborhoods and intergroup relations in Newark. The research was done by Market Planning Corporation of New York City.

The purpose of the \$30,000.00 study is to produce facts and opinions concerning life in Newark which will aid the Mayor and his Group Relations Commission in eliminating prejudice and guaranteeing equal rights for all groups in the City.

The three volume, 630 page survey called "Newark—A City in Transition" is the most complete exploration of human relations ever accomplished in any American city. The basis for the findings was 4,028 interviews conducted with heads of households throughout every neighborhood in Newark.

Daniel S. Anthony, director of the Commission in commenting on the study said, "The transition is descriptive of the mobility of the Negro population of Newark. Whereas, most of Newark's Negroes lived in the central core of the city in 1950, just eight years later, more than half of the total has moved to more desirable neighborhoods. The report indicates that this diffusion of Newark's largest minority group throughout the city has been accompanied by a better understanding between Negroes and whites living in the integrated neighborhoods".

Despite these striking changes in the

racial composition of Newark, there has been little alteration in the total population. The report adds, "Newark, like all other Northern urban centers, has undergone an exodus to the suburbs. As is typical, this flight to suburbia accounts for a shift in the balance of population." Newark has undergone this transition very peacefully. There has been none of the severe racial tension and conflict which has occurred in many large Northern cities. In fact, "The majority of both whites and Negroes feel that races always get along well in Newark".

The rapidly changing racial composition of Newark does not appear to have influenced an undue proportion of its population to make plans for moving. The presence of Negroes in white neighborhoods was of much less importance than factors unrelated to race in the decision of whites to move. Only 16% of whites who planned to move said they did not want to live near Negroes.

Awareness of any disharmony between religious groups in Newark is practically non-existent. Only 1% of either groups report such awareness.

The research also pointed out a "high degree of contact between whites and Negroes in the city. Two thirds of all whites and 85% of Negroes have had

some kind of interracial contacts". Many of these contacts doubtless take place because of the wide-spread integration of Negroes in most sections of the city.

On the other hand this survey indicates that Negroes and Puerto Ricans must pay premium prices in most areas for their homes and apartments. Almost 3/4 of the Negroes say they pay more in rent than whites for the same kind of apartments. The reasons they offer relate mostly to gouging by landlords or to the construction of rent barriers to keep Negroes out of certain housing or neighborhoods.

Because housing presents the most pressing problem in intergroup relations in Newark, Market Planning Corporation recommends a mobilization of all City government resources and the local housing industry to fight rent gouging and housing discrimination against minority groups.

Mariano J. Rinaldi, Business Administrator, in the absence of Mayor Leo P. Carlin, said, "Mayor Carlin is well aware of the rent gouging indicated in the research and has already taken steps to correct the condition. He has alerted department heads involved in the problem to an all-out campaign to halt the damaging practices of the exploiters."

"He has also procured the agreement of the local Real Estate Board to cooperate with him in citing any members who violate their code of ethics in this regard. But he firmly believes that a strong rent control law is still the best solution to the problem."

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(AN EDITORIAL)

THE BIG SWINDLE

The members of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations at their regular June meeting were appalled to learn of the extent of rent gouging in Newark. They assured the Newark Tenants League and the Newark Fair Housing Practices Committee that they would take action on the complaints they registered before the Commission.

We are happy to report we are not alone in this fight against the rent exploitation racket now becoming a festering sore in our neighborhoods.

The story on page 3 which appeared in the Newark Evening News clearly spells out the formula being used by the speculators.

Mayor Leo P. Carlin has called the local Real Estate Board into corrective action.

The wrongs will not be righted, however, until all city residents rise up in action against the practice and let their voices be heard.

The Mayor's Commission on Group Relations will see that all complaints bearing on any discrimination aspect of this problem will receive immediate attention or referral.

PROGRAM SERVICES

Each summer the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations extends its program services to organizations and groups in Essex County. The 1500 organizations and individuals on the Commission mailing list are sent an announcement of the program services and the latest program topics being offered by the Mayor's Commission. The recipient is asked to respond on the enclosed card which lists the following topics:

1. Newark — A City in Transition, (Discussion of Survey).
2. To Move or Not To Move? Where Shall We Live?
3. The Status Seekers and Race Relations.
4. The Unfinished Business of American Democracy.
5. Who Are the Gentle People of Prejudice?
6. Advice on Panels, Film Forums and Program Planning.

Call Mitchell 3-6300, Ext. 231 for further information.

Scholarships Awarded to Newark Residents For Summer Human Relations Workshops

Daniel S. Anthony, Director of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations announced the award of scholarship grants to the Workshop in Human Relations held at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N. J.

The Rutgers Workshops, Community Leadership in Intergroup Relations, July 12-18, and the advanced Modern Trends in Intergroup Relations, July 19-25, are co-sponsored by the State Division Against Discrimination, National Conference of Christians and Jews and Rutgers University.

The Community Leadership Workshop is designed for those "persons who wish to improve their understanding of the problems confronting their communities in intergroup relations and to learn up-to-date techniques useful to their solution".

The Modern Trends Workshop is an advanced course designed for those who have had previous workshop experience or extensive work in human relations in the community. This year the workshop will concentrate exclusively on problems of discrimination in housing.

Walter D. Chambers, Asst. Director of the Commission, also announced the award of scholarships to Misses Joan Ellis and Judy Isacoff to attend the

Encampment for Citizenship, a six-week summer camp-institute designed for young adults. The Encampment includes young people from many parts of the country and abroad; from many varied economic, social, racial and religious groups. The program of lectures, discussion groups and field trips explores the major problems of our time; international affairs, economic, civil rights, human relations and practical techniques for citizen action in government and community affairs. The 1959 Encampment for Citizenship will be held on the Fieldston School Campus, Riverdale, N. Y., June 23 to August 8, 1959.

Miss Esther Isacoff was given a grant to attend the Brotherhood Youth Camp sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews, August 31 to Sept. 4.

The Mayor's Commission annually presents these scholarships to qualified City employees or Newark residents. These workshopers utilize their skills and knowledge not only in their respective jobs, agencies or organizations, but also to assist the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations in carrying out its program of education and action toward the elimination of discrimination and prejudice.



Mayor Leo P. Carlin presents scholarship awards for the Annual Summer Workshops at Rutgers University, the Encampment for Citizenship at Riverdale, New York and The National Conference of Christians and Jews Youth Camp at Beacon, New York. Shown from left to right are: Joan Ellis, Bernadine L'Hommiedieu, Mrs. Emma Pitta, Frederick Appleby, Mayor Carlin, Mrs. Anne M. Winkler, Judy Isacoff, Esther Isacoff and Anne Brown. Not shown in the picture: Sgt. John Bradley of the Newark Police Department.

HOUSING SQUEEZE SPREADING SLUMS

By Andre Briod

A new landlord-tenant game of racial discrimination in reverse has been growing popular recently in the Clinton Hill section, to the detriment of both whites and Negroes.

The game is played with one landlord, one apartment building, and an all-white tenancy. The idea is to get the white tenants out as quickly as possible and refill the building with Negro tenants. The lever is manipulation of rents. The object is to get more income from the building.

Negroes, because of the housing squeeze which faces them, pay more rent and receive less services in the long run for given quarters.

Every game has winners and losers, and it's not hard to find them in this case. The landlord wins, as anyone who adds up rents can plainly see. The losers are:

The white tenants, who are uprooted from apartments in which they may have been settled for decades.

The Negro tenants, who must pay higher rents than their white predecessors, and whose new homes will turn into slums as landlords cut down on maintenance and care of the buildings.

Creeping Blight

There is another loser too: the neighborhood where such changeovers occur. The effects of blight in one building are almost inevitably felt in the value and condition of surrounding properties.

That racial conversion of apartments occurred with considerable frequency in Clinton Hill during recent months has been confirmed by leaders of the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council. It was reconfirmed by Mayor Leo P. Carlin, who last week urged the Board of Realtors of Newark, Irvington and Hillsdale to join in a fight against the practice.

Such forced changeovers from white to Negro occupancy can't be confused with the ordinary transition which occurs as Negroes living in the slum-ridden part of the city seek better living conditions in the sections adjoining the Central Ward. The deliberate nature of the system was clearly evident in an inspection of a number of such cases in Clinton Hill.

A six-family building in W. Bigelow St. was occupied by white tenants only

on April 1. By April 25 five of the white families had moved and colored families had replaced them. The white families had a good reason to move. Their rents were jacked up from \$55 monthly to \$100. The new Negro tenants pay \$90.

A similar rent increase went into effect in February for the three families in a Chadwick Ave. house. That didn't do the trick, however, for the whites stayed on, paying the higher rent. In April the landlord moved again, increasing the rent to \$125. That did it. He emptied his building and brought in Negro tenants, who pay \$25 a week in rent, more than \$100 a month.

In a six-family house on Peshine Ave., where the same transition took place about a year ago, the landlord found an additional way to squeeze a few extra dollars from his building. He divided each apartment into two units and charged the Negro tenants almost as much for half the space as he got from whites for a full apartment.

Boarded Dumbwaiters

Some items of service which are cut out seem insignificant, but they add up. At a Seymour Ave. apartment building, where 13 of the 16 apartments changed from white to Negro after a rent raise three months ago, the landlord has boarded up some of the dumbwaiters. Garbage has to be carried out by the tenants. There used to be a man assigned to that job.

A Negro woman living in a Chadwick Ave. apartment house, where the forced transition took place a year ago, said the lack of maintenance in her apartment caused her to solicit a city inspection for health and sanitary code violations. The inspectors required the landlord to make certain corrections.

According to the tenant, the landlord informed her he was complying with the inspectors' directions—at a \$25 a month increase in rent.

Under similar circumstances, therefore, tenants hesitate to demand even minimum upkeep of their buildings.

The rapid result is that broken windows remain broken, wires remain dangerously exposed and rats and other vermin infest their homes.

Stanley Winters, president of the

Clinton Hill Council, said there have been dozens of cases in his area within the last year in which landlords have forced out white tenants to make room for Negroes.

"If it keeps up, our attempt to stabilize Clinton Hill as an integrated neighborhood will collapse, and with it the program to rehabilitate the area," he said.

The Clinton Hill rehabilitation program, which is slated to receive extensive federal help, is still awaiting the outcome of surveys and planning. When the time finally comes for action rather than planning, officials may find they have a different neighborhood from the one they started with.

(Reprint from Newark Sunday News, June 28, 1959)

STATE CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS

Outstanding among the state civil rights laws enacted during the first six months of 1959 were those of Colorado, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Oregon prohibiting discrimination or segregation in private housing. These were the first such laws enacted at the state level in the United States. Their forerunners were two city ordinances adopted in New York City in December 1957 and in Pittsburgh in December 1958.

Other major civil rights laws passed during the same period include a California statute prohibiting discrimination in public, publicly-aided and redevelopment housing; California and Ohio enactments of effective FEP laws with commission-type enforcement procedures, raising to 16 the number of states with such laws; a Missouri law prohibiting discrimination in state employment, but providing no sanctions; Maine's prohibition of discrimination in places of public accommodation, resort or amusement, making 23 states with such laws; and California's broadening of its civil rights statute.

In addition, Connecticut and New Mexico strengthened the powers of their existing commissions against discrimination. Missouri made its temporary Human Rights Commission a permanent agency of the state and Washington prohibited discriminatory inquiries in connection with applications for credit.

Research Team Recommends Mobilization

(Continued from Page 1, Column 3)

Rent Exploitation of Minorities

A comparison of rental figures by individual neighborhoods shows that in the areas in which the largest number of Negro and Puerto Rican renters live—Central Ward, Central Business-South Broad St., Clinton Hill and West Ward—the average monthly rent paid by them is higher than that paid by whites.

Newark's minorities, though they pay higher rents in these areas, are not getting larger apartments for the extra money. Furthermore, they are slightly less likely than whites to have private toilet facilities, which raises the possibility that they may even be getting poorer facilities for more money.

Mr. Anthony said, "This survey has been a tremendous aid to our Group Relations agency in planning for the future. We are now preparing a program aimed at dispelling the widespread belief that property values decline because Negroes move into white neighborhoods. Home owners must begin to realize that whites moving out of neighborhoods is the major cause of devaluation and not the fact that Negroes move in."

"Numerous studies by real estate appraisers and private foundations have shown that values remain firm if whites do not panic and flee after the first Negro families move into a previously all-white neighborhood," Anthony said.

Additional Recommendations— The Schools

In its examination of Newark's school system, Market Planning Corporation finds that relatively few of Newark's heads of households are dissatisfied with the extent of integration. 52% of Negroes are satisfied, while 17% think that more integration is needed. The Survey team recommends that the Commission should investigate further to determine the validity of the complaints registered by this minority of the Negro population.

The Police

Market Planning Corporation finds that "stories about police discrimination, physical abuse, unfair arrests and to a lesser extent, laxness in the protection of Negroes are widespread and have been heard by almost half of the Negro community. The majority of Negro complainants, however, do not indict the police force as a whole, but pin the blame on individual officers."

The researchers recommend programs to improve relations between the police force and the Negro citizens, such as human relations workshops and the careful assignment of Negro and white policemen in the various neighborhoods, plus a public relations program to improve attitudes toward the police force. They suggest that the Mayor's Commission and other human relations agencies in the community should collaborate with the Police Department in solving these problems.

Content of the Research

The content of the study falls into two general sections. Volume I describes the residents of Newark in terms of the areas in which they presently live as well as where they came from and where they plan to move to, their racial or ethnic background, their ages, the amount of money they make, the rent they pay and facts on their housing.

Volume II is concerned with the attitudes and opinions of the heads of Newark's households on matters of group relations. What attitudes do white and Negroes have toward each other—estimates of racial, religious or nationality problems in the city, and opinions about the equality of public services.

Volume III is a summary of the major findings with Market Planning Corporation's recommendations to the City of Newark.

SELECTED READING

Van Til, *Prejudice—how do people get that way?* Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, 315 Madison Ave., New York 22, N. Y. 1958.

Explanation of how people become prejudiced and how prejudice can be prevented.

Ashley-Montague, Montague F., *Education and Human Relations*. Grove Press. 1958.

"Collection of essays analyzes nature of human relations and suggests how education can be used to improve interpersonal relations."

Beaumont, Charles. *Introducer*. Putnam. 1958.

"A hate-monger demands on a southern town to prevent integration in the schools."

Davis, Keith. *Human Relations in Business*. McGraw-Hill. 1957.

"Employee human relations fundamentals."

Hughes, Langston and Bostemps. Arno, Editors. *Book of Negro Folklore*. Dodd, Mead & Co. 1958.

"Representative selections of the Negro cultural heritage."

Background of Present Study

In May of 1957, the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations contracted Dr. Chester Rapkin of the University of Pennsylvania to make a preliminary study of the City. Dr. Rapkin, with the assistance of George and Eunice Grier, completed "Group Relations in Newark 1957" in September of that year.

On the basis of this study, the Commission on Group Relations determined that the basic human relations questions of the city involved population and neighborhood changes. Six major national research organizations were asked to submit bids for a survey of these changes and the attitudes of the people of Newark concerning many aspects of community relations in their neighborhoods and the city at large.

Market Planning Corporation, a research affiliate of McCann-Erickson, one of the largest advertising agencies in the world, was chosen to conduct the survey. The general purpose of the study reflects the objectives of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations to foster the growth of healthy relationships between the many groups which make up Newark and to reduce prejudice and discrimination wherever they may exist.

MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON GROUP RELATIONS

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